GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2950
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2016
Sharing of Data
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Will the Minister of PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to a study, conducted by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, the Central Government Ministries/Departments and States and Union Territory Governments are reluctant and unwilling to share even basic data under the Right to Information Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the steps being taken to strengthen the procedure so as to minimize the trend of rejecting or evading information to RTI applicants?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office. (DR. JITENDRA SINGH)
(a) & (b): The report of the Common-Wealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) available on its website, analyses the trends of the implementation of the Right to Information Act (RTI) based on the Annual report - 2014-15 of the Central Information Commission (CIC).
Some of the key findings of this report inter-alia include the following:
i. 75.27 % of 2030 registered public authorities submitted their annual returns to the CIC in 2014-15.
ii. Total of 7,55,247 RTI applications were received by reporting public authorities in 2014-15, which is about 79,000 less than RTI applications received in 2013-14.
iii. The CIC imposed penalties of Rs.7.39 lakh in 2014-15 as compared to Rs.19.25 lakh in 2013-14.
As per the Annual Report of the CIC, 75.27% of the Public Authorities have filed their Annual Returns to the CIC for 2014-15, which is higher than the figure of 72.54 % for 2013-14, indicating an improved compliance over the previous year.
It is pertinent to mention that the Government has not entrusted any study to the CHRI on the implementation of the RTI act.
(c): The RTI Act, 2005 provides for imposition of penalty on the Public Information Officer for malafidely denying or knowingly giving incorrect, incomplete or misleading information or for destroying information that was the subject matter of the request or obstructing in any manner in furnishing the information within the prescribed time period.
Contdâ€¦2/-

In addition, the Government has taken several steps to strengthen the regime of RTI Act, which inter-alia includes the following:
i. An RTI online web portal www.rtionline.gov.in was launched to facilitate online filing of RTI applications and appeals with the facility of online payment of RTI fees.
ii. The Government has conducted training and capacity building programs for Public Information Officers and First Appellate Authorities through State Government Training Institutes for effective implementation of the RTI Act. In the year 2015-16.
iii. Ministries/Departments and other Public Authorities are proactively working towards suo-motu disclosure and more information is put on their websites so as to reduce the need for filing RTI applications.
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